CPA SCOTLAND BRANCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE 2nd MEETING WHICH WAS HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2013 AT 12.45pm IN ROOM Q1.04 AND 5.15pm
IN ROOM TG23

Present: Patricia Ferguson MSP
Margaret Mitchell MSP
Tavish Scott MSP (Chair)
Sandra White MSP (from 5.15pm)

In attendance: Margaret Neal, Secretary
Stephen Herbert, Senior Parliamentary Relations Officer
Claire Bennett (attended the meeting at 12.45pm)

1. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Sandra White MSP for the meeting which took place at 12.45pm. During this part of the meeting, Agenda items 1-6, 9 and 12 were discussed.

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 June 2013**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

3. **Gordon Arthur, Director of Communications, Glasgow 2014 Limited**

Gordon Arthur, Director of Communications, and Kenny Stewart, Parliamentary Liaison Officer, from Glasgow 2014 Ltd attended the meeting to update Members of the Branch Executive Committee on arrangements for the 2014 Commonwealth Games. Mr Arthur delivered a presentation about progress to date and forthcoming key activities in the lead up to the Commonwealth Games. Members noted that the Commonwealth Games General Assembly had visited the various sites in June 2013 and had reported that progress was well ahead of schedule. Members of the Committee were also pleased to note that all the sporting venues were finished and in use by the public.

The Committee learned that the “Game on Scotland” programme of activities included an educational resource package which had attracted 10,000 downloads from the Glasgow 2014 website.
The presentation was followed by a Q&A session with Members. The main topics discussed were as follows:

- The Commonwealth Games legacy and how the city and Scotland might attract future international sporting events.

- Facilities in Glasgow were in place for individual events however it would be a challenge to convert the venues for multi-sports events. Members also noted that despite Scotland’s unsuccessful bid to host the World Youth Games, the Sighthill area in Glasgow will still undergo re-development for future events.

- Mr Arthur confirmed that members of the Glasgow 2014 team would be pleased to meet with Caribbean groups in Scotland to discuss matters relating to the Commonwealth Games.

- The Glasgow 2014 team were congratulated on the ticketing process and also the volunteering interview process.

- Ms Ferguson mentioned that she had the opportunity to raise the profile of Glasgow and the Commonwealth Games during the Commonwealth Plenary Conference which had been held in South Africa in September 2013.

- Lastly, a discussion also took place about the political neutrality of the Commonwealth Games.

4. **10th CPA Canada Parliamentary Seminar in Ottawa from 2-8 June 2013 Visit Report**

Jenny Marra MSP reported to the Branch on the seminar and tabled her report.

The main points mentioned were as follows:

- Debates at the seminar were pertinent to Ms Marra’s work as a Member of Parliament.
- Similar to the UK, there was a conversation in Canada about the possibility of abolishing the upper house.
- Discussion of the referenda in Québec was interesting although not always readily transferable into the Scottish context.
- Ms Marra found that there was not too much in the way of practical applications that could be applied to her role within the Scottish Parliament.
- The issue of gender representation in legislatures arose throughout discussions at the seminar. Ms Marra noted that the African National Congress is aiming for 50:50 representation.
- Ms Marra is corresponding with two Canadian Senators, who she met at the conference, on matters of mutual interest.
Ms Marra mentioned that her journey to and from Canada was problematic. There were considerable delays both with the outward and inward flights exacerbated by poor customer service by the airline concerned.

Ms Marra thanked the Members of the Branch Executive Committee for providing the opportunity to participate at the seminar.

5. 59th Commonwealth Plenary Conference (CPC), South Africa

Hugh Henry MSP submitted apologies and informed the Committee that he would attend the meeting on 30 October 2013 and provide feedback on the conference.

Maureen Watt MSP provided feedback on her experience as the delegate from Scotland Branch. The main points raised were as follows:

- The scale of the conference and the organisation could be overwhelming to Members who had not previously attended a CPA conference. Ms Watt suggested that it would be useful if Members who had attended previous CPCs could brief Members of the delegation prior to departure.
- Smaller numbers at the workshops would have been more useful / productive.
- The workshop on land issues was delivered by excellent speakers and the content was very good.
- A range of administration issues were raised with the organisation of the conference. For example, missing luggage, last minute changes to accommodation, and generally weak administrative arrangements. Ms Watt hoped that Cameroon would learn lessons from the South Africa conference and address the administrative shortfalls when planning the 2014 conference.
- The issue of homosexual rights, in relation to the Commonwealth Charter, led to extensive discussion of this issue on the last day of the Conference
- Ms Watt met the Malawian delegation at the conference and spent half an hour with them. Initial attempts to meet up with the Malawian delegation had been hampered because the conference biography booklet was not issued until the night before departure day, contained a range of inaccuracies and lacked contact information.
- Lastly, Ms Watt informed the Committee that she engaged with other delegates from the BIMR and attended the CWP BIMR hustings meeting which took place prior to the election of the CWP Chairperson.

Patricia Ferguson MSP, who was the leader of the Scotland Branch delegation, also provided some feedback on the conference including the following:

- Sir Alan Haselhurst MP will stand down as Chairperson of the CPA following the General Assembly in Cameroon in October 2014.
- It is the intention of Secretary General of the CPA to invite the newly established counties of Kenya to join the CPA.
- The CWP had noted that the BIMR grouping was the only region to hold a hustings meeting for the CWP Chairperson position.
6. Draft minutes of the CPA Scotland Branch Annual General Meeting 2013 – Item 6 was brought forward

It was agreed that the draft minutes were in order and should be posted on the CPA Scotland Branch website as draft minutes.

7. AWEPA – Item 9 was brought forward

It was agreed to invite Dr Balch to a future meeting of the Branch Executive Committee.

8. Cayman Islands report - Item 12 brought forward

The content of the report was noted.

The Meeting adjourned and then resumed at 5.15pm (all members of the Branch Executive Committee were present).

9. Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Steering Group

Members of the Branch Executive Committee congratulated Patricia Ferguson MSP on her election as Vice-Chair of the CWP Steering Group. Ms Ferguson provided some further feedback about the circumstances surrounding the election process for CWP office bearers and on the work of the Steering Group. Ms Ferguson explained that her new role had not been defined and she had written to the Hon Rebecca Kadaga MP, Chairperson of the CWP, seeking guidance on the role.

Members of the Branch Executive Committee agreed that Ms Ferguson should instruct the Regional Secretariat to apply to the CPA for funding as a matter of urgency in order to enable the BIMR region to support the newly CWP Steering Group and more generally to strengthen CWP activity within the BIMR region.

10. Forward Programme of Activities / Financial Paper

Members of the Branch Executive Committee agreed the paper. Discussion took place around the BIMR CWP conference and associated costs. It was agreed that the date of the conference should be moved to 16 March 2014 with the same structure as previously outlined.

It was noted that the next CPC will be in Cameroon in October 2014 and that there is a decision to be made nearer the time of the conference as to the size of the Scottish Parliament delegation.
11. Future Elections and Referendums across the Commonwealth

The contents of the paper were noted.

12. Role of the Special Envoy

The role for the Special Envoy at the BIMR CWP conference was discussed and it was agreed that the Branch Secretary should write to the Special Envoy inviting her to speak at the conference. It was further agreed that the Special Envoy should address delegates on issues which were a priority in relation to her humanitarian work. During the course of this discussion it was agreed that the conference should take place on 16 March 2014.

Discussion then broadened out to consider the BIMR CWP conference and the following points were agreed:

- That it would be better to use hotels in close proximity to the Parliament.
- That places at the conference should be restricted to women parliamentarians however if the uptake of places at the conference were to be lower than expected that invitations should be opened to other groups.
- All female MSPs should be invited to the conference.

Ms Ferguson informed the Committee that she has already issued an informal invitation to all members of the CWP Steering Group including the newly elected Chairperson.

It was also agreed that in accordance with the SPCB charity policy that the Branch would be unable to pay for a tribute in the Music Industry Trusts commemorative book.

13. British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Annual General Meeting

The contents of the paper were noted and it was agreed that the current representation at the BIMR CWP Steering Committee should continue. It was agreed that this matter required no further consideration.

14. Any Other Business

The Branch Executive Committee agreed that a working lunch could be provided for Members of the UK Parliament’s International Development Committee on 31 October given the availability of Members that day. The Branch Secretary agreed to e-mail Members regarding availability for the working lunch and also in relation to visits from New South Wales and Pakistan.

15. Dates of next meetings

- Wed 30 October 2013 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04
- Wed 27 November 2013 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04
- Wed 29 January 2014 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04
- Wed 26 February 2014 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04
- Wed 26 March 2014 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04

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